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Syria, Tabernacle, Temple and Temple Service, Texts and Versions of the Old Testament, Tobit, Trade and Commerce, the Tribes, Wine and Strong Drink, Wisdom Literature and the Book of Wisdom, Zoroastrianism, etc., etc. —*s.*

ALBUM-KERN. Opstellen geschreven ter eere van *Dr. H. Kern.* Hem aangeboden door vrienden en leerlingen op zijn zeventigsten verjaardag. Leiden : E. J. Brill. 1903. Pages, xvii, 395.

There is a regulation in Holland according to which all professors retire with full pay at their seventieth year. Professor Kern having attained the age of a septuagenarian now enters upon his well-merited release from work, and in his honor his friends have made this remarkable collection.

It is a unique book, this *Album-Kern*, a volume in large quarto containing collections of several most prominent professors of Sanscrit, Pâli, Chinese, Anglo-Saxon, Dutch literature, etc. It is introduced by a letter to Professor Kern, written by none less than Prof. Otto von Böhtingk. The most remarkable contribution is the translation of a Sanskrit poem, the gambler's song, one of the seventy songs of the Rigveda, published by Geldner and Kaegi. The manuscript of the translation, which is here reproduced in facsimile, was found among the late Professor Roth's papers and it is probable that it is his own version and versification. Certain it is that it is written from the beginning to the end in the handwriting of the late Professor Roth.

We hope that those contributions of the *Album-Kern* which treat subjects of universal interest will in time be republished in some more accessible form.

The frontispiece is a faithful portrait of Professor Kern.

P. C.

THE SURD OF METAPHYSICS. An Inquiry Into the Question : Are There Things-in-Themselves ? By *Dr. Paul Carus.* Chicago : The Open Court Publishing Co. London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd. 1903. Pages, vi, 233. Price, \$1.25.

This book contains a precise outline of the philosophy of the editor of *The Monist*, tested at one of the most critical questions of metaphysics, the doctrine of things-in-themselves. Surd in mathematics is that which is incapable of being expressed in rational numbers, in a word the irrational, and applying the same conception to philosophy, our author investigates the claim made by metaphysicians that there is some irreducible quantity in experience which leads to metaphysicism, agnosticism, or mysticism, finding a classical expression in the doctrine of things-in-themselves. Dr. Carus rejects the assumption of things-in-themselves, quoting one of the Goethe-Schiller Xenions as his motto :

" Since Metaphysics of late
without heirs to her fathers was gathered,
Here at the auctioneer's
'things-in-themselves' will be sold."
—*Xenions* of Schiller and Goethe.

While the philosophy of Dr. Carus is anti-metaphysical, anti-agnostic, and anti-mystical, he warns the reader not to overlook the truth that is contained in the theory of things-in-themselves. He discusses in the first part his own proposition—viz., an elimination of the metaphysical surd from philosophy. He comes to the conclusion that the metaphysical *x* is not unknown but admits of a solution, leading to the new philosophy, not of nescience but of science (pp. 1-64). In the second part Dr. Carus discusses the views of modern thinkers, commonly known to be progressive but still retaining the residue of a belief in a metaphysical surd (pp. 65-144); and finally in the third part he shows the significance of his solution by applying it to the problem of the soul (pp. 145-226).

Much of the contents of this latest production from the editor's pen has appeared in *The Monist* in the form of essays, but they are here collected and reduced to system so as to exhibit their interconnection and show the scope and method of the author's views.

Σ.

FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS. *The Method of Philosophy as a Systematic Arrangement of Knowledge.* By Dr. Paul Carus. Third Edition. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd. 1903. Pages, xii, 373. Price, \$1.50.

This book was out of print for some time, the author being too much engaged in other literary work to revise it for a new edition. In the meantime the publishers were pressed again and again with orders and are now glad to announce its reappearance. The general scope of the third edition is the same as that of the second edition, and our author remains faithful to the original motto of his work, tersely expressed in these sentences:

"Not agnosticism but positive science,
Not mysticism but clear thought,
Neither supernaturalism nor materialism,
But a unitary conception of the world,
Not dogma but religion,
Not creed but faith."

Σ.

DIE WELTRÄTHSEL. Von Ernst Haeckel, Professor an der Universität Jena. Bonn: Verlag von Emil Strauss. 1903. Pages, 168. Price, 1 M.

Professor Haeckel's *World Riddle*, which was reviewed at length some time ago in our columns, has appeared in a popular edition, in both German and English dress.¹ The enormous success of this book proves not only the versatility of its author, but also the deep interest which the public of the present day take in the popular explanation of religious topics from the standpoint of a scientist.

—P—

¹ English publishers, Charles Watts & Co., London.